

Newport Forest

Saturday September 2 2006

3:50 - 5:40 pm

Weather: prec. 14mm; RH 95%; calm; rning; LM 15C; FCF 14C

Purpose: three-day stay

Participants: Pat & Kee

It rained lightly from our arrival until about 7pm. Not surprisingly, the fungi were out in full force. On my way down to the creek, I collected a new cushion/crust. (S) Some nipple galls on a nearby Basswood also caught my attention. (S) Creek levels have remained relatively low throughout the recent rains.

Just before supper, I took the wheelbarrow up to the gravel pile, spreading three loads on ruts in the track before the girls grew tired of the repetition and led me off into the gallery forest, where they showed me a copse with many fungi growing here and there. I found some corals, "wine mycenae" and a delicate, Panellus-like fungus.

At 11pm I took the girls for a night walk along the Two-bridge Trail. (TBT) Back at the trailer, I did some ID work on my specimens while the girls slept with Pat. The Panellus turned out to be just that - Luminescent Panellus to boot. How wonderful to see the faint glow these mushrooms gave off in the moonshade of the Nook.

In the morning, Pat pointed out a new Gordian worm on the trailer deck. (I was unable to ID this later, owing to a lack of appropriate reference materials. But I did determine that it was a male. The specimen was all-black and its cuticle is very difficult to make out in the 10X scope.)

We returned to last night's copse to collect two more mushrooms, some small brown ones on leaf litter (S) and some really small white ones growing in tiny clusters. (S) The former were very similar to *Gymnopus subnudus* (lacking the "small central knob"), while the latter remain unidentified.

While I cleared a large BH branch that had fallen on the track (blocking our exit), Pat found two more wonderful mushrooms: A large Chicken-of-the-Woods (not new) growing near the Nook and A Witch's Hat in the LM. (new) She also saw a Bald Eagle fly right over the LM.

On the way out to ET, we spotted a group of Turtleheads in full bloom, always a wonderful sight. Exploring a little further into the vegetation, Pat spied a Spice Bush, growing vigorously among the herbs. There was no sign of a tree-gard and I came to the conclusion that we had not planted this specimen.

Nearby, Pat also found a very large troop of Crumble Caps on the forest floor. She also picked up a blue-flowered plant that turned out to be a Lobelia. (See new species.)

The day had been sunny mixed with clouds, gradually clearing toward evening. Just after sunset, Pat drew my attention to the awesome sight of a Great Horned owl perched on one of the highest branches of the old dead elm at the edge of the BCF just across from the trailer. It remained for several minutes before flying off. Was it after the young skunks?

After dark, I took the girls for a night walk to the river. It was a wonderful night, with moonlight filtering down through the BC Forest, illuminating the humid air in magical shafts. Near the landing, we smelled the distinctive odor of skunks spray - but saw no skunks, either then or at any other time during this visit. We explored the three river lagoons, but the landscape must have seemed barren and rocky to them. On the way back, we could no longer smell the skunk odor at the RL. We paused for a break at the bend where Blind Crook crosses Edgar's Trail. Here the girls climbed a very tall Black willow up to about 40 feet. (I had to shut my eyes for fear they would fall, but they DO seem to have become expert climbers.)

By 11:30 pm, after some nervous encounters with Greylock & Co., the sisters had run out of steam and decided to sleep with Pat. As I worked on specimens or read an Eastern Screech Owl whinnied and warbled from the BCF.

The morning dawned sunny, but the sky slowly clouded over toward noon. Pat watched a Cooper's Hawk make two attempts at an Eastern Wood Peewee at the GHO tree of the previous evening.

In the afternoon, we planted about 50 SH nuts in the regen zones, marking each with an orange flag as we went. It was then video time. I took a scene of the Heliopsis sunflowers swaying in the breeze, (V) as well as a pan of the Wingstems just inside the "Hole." (V) We then took the canoe down to the creek, making several downstream runs to test the feasibility of such a shot. With Pat working the camera in the bow and me paddling, we demonstrated the potential for this scene very well. (V)

Stopped by the Hurdles on the way out we learned in a roundabout way from the ever-taciturn Edgar that he had found Snooper floating in the pond after an illness involving the ingestion of roadkill and/or pork bones that may have perforated her intestines. In the end, it was her appetite that did this fortunate/unfortunate animal in.

Birds: (24)

American Crow (FCF); American Goldfinch (LM); Bald Eagle (LM); Black-capped Chickadee (GF); Blue Jay (Tr); Canada Goose (TR); Cedar Waxwing (LM); Common Flicker (BCF); Cooper's Hawk (LM/BCF); Downy Woodpecker (Tr); Eastern Screech Owl (EW); Eastern Wood Peewee (BCF); Gray Catbird (BCF); Great Blue Heron (FC/TR); Great Horned Owl (LM/BCF); Mallard (TR); Mourning Dove (BCF); Northern Cardinal (GF); Red-bellied Woodpecker (Tr); Red-tailed Hawk (TR); Spotted Sandpiper (TR); Tree Swallow (LM); Turkey Vulture (TR); White-breasted Nuthatch (Tr)

New species:

Basswood Leaf Gall (Acari: Eriophyidae)	<i>Eriophyes tiliae</i>	GF KD
Downy Lobelia	<i>Lobelia puberula</i>	BCF PD
“Rose Mycena”	<i>Mycena rosella</i>	GF pd/KD
Luminescent Panellus	<i>Panellus stipticus</i>	GF KD
Witch's Hat	<i>Hygrophorus conicus</i>	LM pd/KD
“Brown Hairy-legs”	[<i>Gymnopus subnudus</i>]	GF K1D